

and to promote and practice religion in any way one chooses.

Resorting to writing more laws with the intent of instilling good character and good manners in the people is anathema to liberty. The love of liberty can come only from within and is dependent on a stable family and a society that seeks the brotherhood of man through voluntary and charitable means.

And there are others who believe that government force is legitimate in promoting what they call "fair redistribution." The proponents of this course have failed to read history and instead adhere to economic myths. They ignore the evidence that these efforts to help their fellow man will inevitably fail. Instead, it will do the opposite and lead to the impoverishment of many.

But more importantly, if left unchecked, this approach will destroy liberty by undermining the concept of private property ownership and free markets, the bedrock of economic prosperity.

None of these alternatives will work. Character and good manners are not a government problem. They reflect individual attitudes that can only be changed by individuals themselves. Freedom allows virtue and excellence to blossom. When government takes on the role of promoting virtue, illegitimate government force is used and tyrants quickly appear on the scene to do the job. Virtue and excellence become illusive, and we find instead that the government officials become corrupt and freedom is lost, the very ingredient required for promoting virtue, harmony, and the brotherhood of man.

Let us hope and pray that our political focus will soon shift toward preserving liberty and individual responsibility and away from authoritarianism. The future of the American Republic depends on it. Let us not forget that the American dream depends on keeping alive the spirit of liberty.

#### SECRETARY BILL RICHARDSON AND BILL HEDDEN: A POWERFUL TEAM TO SAVE THE SOUTHWEST'S WATER AND NATIONAL PARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and in thanks to two powerful "Bills." Not the legislation we introduce here, but as in Bill Richardson and Bill Hedden, for their work to move the largest uranium mine tailings pile that has ever threatened the drinking water in the United States.

Secretary of Energy, Bill Richardson, and Bill Hedden, the Utah Conservation Director of the Grand Canyon Trust, are two lifesaving "Bills" who have shown incredible leadership in

pushing to move a uranium tailings pile that currently sits only 750 feet away from the Colorado River near Moab, Utah.

A few days ago, Secretary Richardson unveiled an innovative agreement that would result in moving the tailings pile that is slowly leaching radioactive waste into the Colorado River. And just last night, our other hero, Bill Hedden, was honored by the Project on Government Oversight, or POGO, for his tireless efforts to move this poisonous pile. Both men see how important it is to move the tailings pile, which is as big as 118 football fields, rather than capping it in its place. This capping would only ensure that the poisonous waste would continue to leach into the Colorado River for up to 3 centuries.

Because of these visionary "Bills," 25 million people who live down the Colorado River and who depend on it for their drinking water not be doomed to poor "bills" of health from the pollution.

Our "Bills" are working to ensure that one-seventh of the United States, including Las Vegas, Arizona, and the Southern California urban areas of Los Angeles and the city I represent, San Diego, will have water free from this pollution.

Our hero "Bills" are trying to save us from the bill that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, or the NRC, was trying to stick us with. The NRC said that capping the poisonous pile was good enough. The NRC did not care that they were sentencing our children, our grandchildren, and great grandchildren to 270 years of having this radioactive waste leach into our water supply.

These white-hatted "Bills" know that our Nation must protect our water, our animals, and our beautiful National Parks that we have set aside because they are our treasures.

As one of our "Bills," Secretary Richardson, said a few weeks ago, "The time to act is now. Radioactive waste sits at the gateway of two National Parks, Arches and Canyonlands. This area is a geological wonderland, nestled in a valley with scenic red cliffs and rugged, beautiful desert terrain. The Department of Energy has the expertise and experience to relocate the material in a secure, permanent location that is safely away from the Colorado River and our National Parks."

Mr. Speaker, I tip my hat to these two courageous "Bills," Secretary Richardson and Grand Canyon Trust's Bill Hedden, for saving us the bill of misery, ill health, and heartache that would go with permanently enshrining this huge pile of waste in the backyard of our National Parks where it would surely and forever pollute the Southwest's drinking water.

I commit, Mr. Speaker, and I hope my colleagues will join me in this pledge, to push through legislation that will make the work of these visionary "Bills" a reality. We must pass

our bill necessary to put the jurisdiction for this poisonous pile where it belongs, in the hands of the Department of Energy.

#### MILITARY FAMILY FOOD STAMP TAX CREDIT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to come to the floor and talk about a bill that I introduced last year, H.R. 1055, the Military Family Food Stamp Tax Credit Act. I have approximately 61 of my colleagues on both sides, Republican and Democrat, who have signed this bill.

Mr. Speaker, there are probably as many as 12,000 men and women in uniform who are willing to die for this country today that are having to live on food stamps. I think that is unacceptable and deplorable that any person that is willing to die for this country would have to be on food stamps.

So we looked at how we could help those in the military that are on food stamps, and we came up with the suggestion from several different sources that probably the best thing we could do was to provide a \$500 tax credit for men and women in uniform.

Mr. Speaker, I bring this photograph of a Marine in my district. This Marine is getting ready to deploy for Bosnia for 6 months. We can see standing on his feet a beautiful little girl, and in his arms a new baby girl. And I looked at this photograph, it was in the Raleigh paper in my State of North Carolina, and it has so much meaning and depth to it that I thought I would have it blown up so that I could bring it to the floor of the House or take it to a committee to remind my colleagues who make the decision on how we pay our military and make the decisions on what we can do to help those men and women in uniform on food stamps.

We have approximately 60 percent of the men and women that serve this Nation that, again, are willing to die for this Nation, that are married. I think this family from Camp Lejeune getting ready to deploy shows just how fortunate we are to have men and women who have families that are willing to serve this Nation.

When I looked at the fact that we in Congress last year passed \$15 billion in foreign aid for countries overseas, and I realize that we have to have foreign aid and we should have northern aid, but I think we could reduce it, frankly. I think I voted against that bill because we need to take care of the American people first. And we certainly need to take care of those in the military that are serving this Nation.

Then I looked at the fact that the President recommended that we eliminate the debt of \$5 billion to 36 countries that owe the American taxpayer \$5 billion. So, therefore, we have excused that debt. I look at what we have